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COMMANDER TASK GROUP 7.3

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REPORT TO THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR

Operation Wigwam Preliminary Report

Project 4.5

AIR PRESSURES FROM A DEEP UNDERWATER BURST

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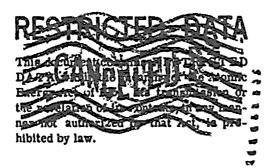
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Dr. A. B. Focke Scientific Director

Sandia Corporation Albuquerque, New Mexico May _955



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of Project 4.5 was to study the danger to aircraft from air pressures resulting from a deep underwater nuclear explosion, and to this end measurements were planned from the surface up to a height of 500 ft and out to 6000 ft from surface zero. Bad weather forced abandonment of all but two measurements, surface pressures at 0 and 6100 ft. These data confirm that acoustic coupling can predict peak air pressures but not later pressures. Coupled with data from experiments with high explosives, a set of predictions are arrived at of air pressures to be expected from WIGWAM—type weapons.

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AIR PRESSURES FROM A DEEP UNDERWATER BURST

1 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of Project 4.5 of Operation WIGWAM was to measure air pressures from a deep underwater nuclear explosion at the surface and at altitudes approaching those which would be used by a delivery aircraft. In particular it was desired:

- 1. To determine the coupling of the water and the air shock, and
- 2. To determine the attenuation of the shock wave with altitude.

2 BACKGROUND AND THEORY

A secondary but important consideration in any proposed use of nuclear weapons is that the delivery aircraft should escape unharmed by its cargo. An underwater explosion is dangerous to an airplane because of the resulting shock wave and because of water thrown up into the air. In this project we deal only with the shock in air; the dome is considered by Project 1.5.1

The problem of what the air pressures from an underwater burst will be is not as simple as has sometimes been assumed. Underwater shock pressures can be estimated from empirical formulae, 2,3, and were measured at WIGWAM by Projects 1.2,4 1.2.1.5 1.3,6 and 4.4.7 The magnitude of a shock transmitted from water into air is usually estimated using acoustic theory, 8,9 but this method estimates only the peak pressure without specifying the subsequent decay. Finally it is not certain how the wave will propagate and decay in the air away from the surface.

The transmission of a pressure wave from water into air can be described acoustically:

$$\frac{P_a}{P_w} = \frac{2 p_a c_a \cos \phi_w}{p_w c_w \cos \phi_a} \tag{1}$$



where P_a and P_w are peak overpressures in air and water respectively, ρ_a and ρ_w are densities of air and water, c_a and c_w velocities of sound, and ϕ_w and ϕ_a are ingles from the normal of incidence and transmission. The angles ϕ_w and ϕ_a are related by Snell's law:

$$\frac{\sin \phi_{\rm w}}{\sin \phi_{\rm a}} = \frac{c_{\rm w}}{c_{\rm a}} \quad (2)$$

These expressions apply only to the initial peak overpressure. The time scale of the air pressure wave is longer than that of the water wave, because water thrown up on the dome maintains air pressures while pressures in the water below are falling. The author knows of no analytical description of this effect, although its existence is affirmed by experimental evidence.

In an acoustic treatment air pressure falls off inversely as the distance from the virtual source of the explosion, modified by the vertical gradient of density and velocity of sound in the atmosphere. Thus one would expect the air pressure to vary as:

The physical reason for such a variation is that the pressure wave diverges as it travels away from its source, and its energy is spread over a larger area. In shock waves another factor causes peak pressure to decrease faster than acoustically. This factor is dissipation of energy at the shock front arising because the rarefaction of expansion behind the front travels faster than the front itself. In an underwater explosion, a third factor also enters: crossfeed between parts of the wave not at the same pressure. For weak shocks and on the vertical axis, these several effects can be consolidated into the one differential equation:

$$\frac{1}{Z}\frac{dZ}{dr} = -\frac{1}{r} \frac{3}{7} \frac{Z}{c0} \frac{2}{5} \frac{\partial xu}{Z \times c \partial x} \tag{4}$$

where ℓ is the ratio P/P₀ of the overpressure to the pressure in front of the shock, r is the distance to the virtual source, θ is the time constant of the shock defined by the expression

$$\frac{1}{9} \quad \frac{1}{p} \quad \frac{\partial p}{\partial t} \tag{5}$$

and \mathbf{u}_1 is the particle velocity in the wave in directions x perpendicular to \mathbf{r} . In this expression the first term on the right comes from divergence, the second from dissipation at the front, and the third from crossfeed or the influence of neighboring parts of the wave.



For spherical symmetry, that is, no crossfeed, there exists 10 an integration of equation 4:

$$\frac{2}{2} = \frac{\mathbf{r_0}}{\mathbf{r}} \left[1 + \frac{\mathbf{a}}{7} \frac{2 \cdot \mathbf{r}}{\mathbf{c} \mathbf{0_0}} \ln \frac{\mathbf{r}}{\mathbf{r_0}} \right]^{-1/3}$$

$$\frac{2}{\mathbf{0_0}} = \left[\frac{\mathbf{r_0} \mathcal{L_0}}{\mathbf{r} \mathbf{2}} \right]^2$$
(6)

Theoretical treatment of the air pressure from a deep underwater explosion therefore resolves itself into a prediction of the air pressure wave at the surface, including its time dependence, and a prediction of its propagation away from the surface.

3 RELATED EXPERIMENTS

Only once, to our knowledge, have there ever been any measurements of air pressures from bursts as deep as the WIGWAM burst. The waterways Experiment Station (WES) of Vicksburg, Mississippi, in conjunction with the Naval Ordnance Laboratory (NOL), has burst 32-1b charges of TNT at depths up to 16.22 ft, which corresponds by W1/3 scaling to a depth of 2000 ft for 30 KT of TNT. The resulting data are summarized in figure 1 and table 1.

One can use these data to check the theoretical ideas expressed above. In table 2 are compared coupling factors (P_a/P_w) predicted acoustically by equation 1 with those actually measured. (The difference between these numbers and those NGL quotes are in part because NOL used nominal values of velocity of sound. The internal evidence of the data — arrival times and cutoff times — indicates that in this set of experiments the velocity of sound in the water was 5570 ft/sec instead of a nominal value of 4d00 ft/sec.) The agreement is reasonably good, within 10 per cent, for the first two stations, but not for the third.

Only a few tracings of the original records are available to us. These indicate that the time scale of the air pressure wave was about ten times as long as that of the underwater wave (table 3). If the water of the dome had acted as a perfect piston, the time constant of the resulting air pressure wave would be $V_{\rm O}/a$, or of the order of seconds. It is obvious that the water did not act as a perfect piston.

Table 4 shows that the overpressure above surface zero decreased more rapidly than inversely with distance. Moreover, the last column of table 4 shows that 2 correction for the time constants of table 3 according to equation 6 still does not fully account for the decrease of pressure with height. Crossfeed must be at work. These WES data indicate clearly that the air shock from an underwater explosion cannot be treated only as an acoustic problem.

On the other hand there is an a priori reason to expect the WES data not to scale to WIGWAM. We have sain that one reason for the nonacoustic behavior of the air wave is the expansion behind the front as measured by the time constant, and have attributed the size of that constant to the action of the dome. But the dome cannot scale. The dome starts rising at a velocity which depends on the incident overpressure and is thereafter decelerated by gravity and air drag; however, gravity does not scale, remaining instead the same for all experiments. Thus in both the WES experiments and in WIGWAM the initial upward rise of the dome at surface zero was about 100 ft/sec. Because of gravity. neither dome would rise more than 150 ft. The scale factor between the two experiments was 123, so that the WIGWAM dome had roughly a hundred times the density of the other and should be a more effective piston. It should keep air durations long and make their effect on peak pressures less. The peak pressures at altitude on wIGWAN should be greater than the WES data would indicate.

4 EXPERIMENTAL PLANS AND OPERATION

Original plans for this project included measurements of free air pressure vs time at surface ranges of 0, 2300, 3900, and 6100 ft. These stations were represented in the tow line by the YC-473, the ICM-1A, the ICM-2A, and the YFNB-12, respectively. Measurements were to be made at heights of 50, 250, and 500 ft above the water except at the 2300-ft station where only a measurement at 50 ft was to be made. Mooring lines of large helium-filled balloons of nylon-covered polyethylene were to be used to hold the gages in place. Each balloon would supply a free lift of 2200 lbs to support gages, transmitters, and cables, and each was to be flown at an altitude of 650 ft.

The first three stations were expected to sink after the burst, so data from these stations were sent back using fm-fm radio telemetering. Two transmitters for this purpose were to be hung 50 ft below each balloon, each housed in a water-proofed metal container and each pair with a quarter-wave ground-plane antenna mounted on top. Two gages were to be mounted at each height of interest with electrical cables running from each gage of a pair to a different transmitter, thus insuring complete information even should one transmitter fail.

The six transmitted signals were received at a trailer on the fantail of the USS Curtiss. The frequency modulated signals were recorded directly on Ampex magnetic tape recorders and were also discriminated and recorded on Consolidated oscillographs.

The 6100-ft station was expected to survive the detonation; therefore hard wire telemetering was used, data being recorded on a magnetic tape recorder and or a Midwest oscillograph.

Pressure transducers used were the Wiancko twisted bourdon tube gage and the Northam and Datran Diaphragm-type variable reluctance gages.



Four balloons were inflated and put into position on the tow line on D-2, but continuing high winds and rough seas prevented attaching the gages and associated telemetering equipment to the mooring lines and raising them to altitude. Because of the winds the balloons became a hazard to aircraft and to the equipment of other projects; the balloons had to be cut loose and measurements at altitude abandoned.

In an eleventh hour attempt to salvage some information of value, gages were installed on D-1 on the YC-473 and the YFN3-12 near the water surface. No such gages could be installed on ICM's 1A and 2A because the tailgate of the US3 Comstock broke and the boats which were to have been used could not be removed from the well. On the YC all gages were mounted on a steel framework welded to the deck so as to extend several feet out over the water and about 20 ft above it. Gages were mounted on the YFNB at three different locations: two on the rail near the bow, two in the cable tub on the forecastle deck, and two tied to a boom on the helicopter deck. These gages were about 24 ft from water level.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

At both the YC and the YFNB there were several gages and hence several pressure-time records. Sample wave forms are shown in figure 2, and pressures and times determined from these records are given in table 5. The table includes all the few data obtained in Project 4.5.

Measurements of under-surface pressures were made at the IC by Naval Research Latoratory (Project 1.2.1) and indirectly by Armour Research Foundation (Project 4.4), and at the YFNB-12 by Naval Ordnance Laboratory (Project 1.2) and Naval Electronic Laboratory (Project 1.3). Their preliminary results are tabulated in table 6. In this table are also given coupling factors ($P_{\rm a}/P_{\rm w}$) calculated from these data and acoustically from equation 1. As in the case of the WES data the agreement is only fair.

We should note at this point that, in spite of good intentions, the gages were not completely free from interference from the barge on which they were mounted. This effect is such as to make gages on the YC read somewhat low, and the gages on the YFNB somewhat high, but in neither case should the effect be more than 10 per cent.

Only from the surface zero measurements can a time constant be determined: It is about 430 Msec, 15 times as long as the underwater time constant. This can be compared with time constants from the WES data, where the ratio is more nearly 10. Thus, as expected, the WIGWAM doze was a more efficient piston than the doze in the WES experiments.



Even after WIGWAM the only large number of experimental data on air pressures from an underwater burst are the WES data. The evidence is that the water-to-air coupling was stronger at WIGWAM than in the WES experiments, especially in the latter parts of the wave. On the other hand the effective blast yield of the WIGWAM shot was smaller than the 30 KT to which the WES data scale. These two considerations somewhat balance each other, being in opposite directions. We therefore recommend that until if and when direct measurements are made successfully, the WES data, scaled, be used to predict air pressures from WIGWAM-type bursts. Figure 3 embodies these recommended pressures.

Those observing the WIGWAM shot noted that a series of sounds were heard, not just one shock. The multiple pressure signals heard were recorded by the gages on the YFWB-12 at times given in table 5. Correlation with motion pictures seems to indicate that the second after-signal was caused by the bubble break-through plume -- indeed it was discovered by timing the plume and then looking back into the records. The third signal may have been caused by the second plume, and the first signal by one of the bubble pulses. The recorded signals are not shocks, but wave trains of indeterminate character.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Principally because of bad weather, only two data were obtained in Project 4.5. Associating these data with theoretical reasoning and with data from experiments with high explosives leads to these tentative conclusions and recommendations:

- 1. The coupling of peak pressures of water and air shock waves can be described acoustically using equation 1. Subsequent behavior cannot.
- 2. The propagation of the air pressure wave away from the surface cannot be described acoustically (equation 3).
- 3. For planning purposes we recommend using air pressures scaled from the WES data as presented in figure 3.
- 4. If any further underwater bursts are made, we recommend measuring air pressures from them, but not using balloons unless better guarantees can be given about weather than at ATMAN. Particularly should pressure measurements be made if relatively shallower bursts are contemplated.

Table 1 AIR AND WATER PRESSURE' FROM WES DATA
(32-1b TNT burst 16.22 ft under water)

Station	Location (actual) (ft)	Location (Scaled to 20 KT) (ft)	Peak Overpressure (psi)	Arrival Time (msec)	Number of Data	Duration (msec)
A	x 0 y 0.5	0 62	2,05	3.00	4	
В	х 0 у 4•0	0 0	1.88	6.00	4	
С	х 0 у 10	0 1230	1.25	11.29	4	
D	x 0 y 16.22	0 2000	0.98	16.96	4	-
Е	x 8.11 y 0.5	1000 62	1.42	3•53	10	••••
F	x 8.11 y 4.0	1000 490	1.34	6.18	5	
G	x 8.11 y 12.0	1000 1480	0.93	12.95	6	
H	x 24.3 y 0.5	3000 62	0.43	5.82	6	
I	x 24.3 y 4.0	3000 490	0.48	9.28	4	Operas.
J	x 24.3 y 10.0	3900 1230	0.50	14.20	2	**
К	х 40.54 у 0.5	5000 62	0.84	8.90	7	Angelius
L	x 56.77 y 0.5	7000 62	0.10	11.97	4	

Table 1 cont'd

Station	Location (actual) (ft)	Location (Scaled to 20 KT) (ft)	Peak Overpressure (psi)	Arrival Time (msec)	Number of Data	Duration (msec)
М	х 0 у – 0•5	0 62	3567*	2.91	3	0.176
N	x 8.1 y -0.5	1000 62	4050	3.30	10	0.183
0	x 17.69 y-16.22	2180 -2000	3500	3.19	10	
P	х 24•3 у - 0•5	3000 62	2630	5.51	3	0.125

*This datum is questionable. The three individual measurements were 4100, 2700, and 3900 psi.

Table 2 COUPLING FACTORS FROM WES DATA

Station	Theoretical (acoustic)	Experimental (actual)	Experimental (smoothed data)	Ratio
A-M	4.82 x 10 ⁻¹ 4	5.75	5•35	0.900
E-N	4.34 x 10 ⁻¹ 4	3.5	3•96	1.097
H-P	2.72 x 10 ⁻¹ 4	1.65	1•59	1.71

Table 3 TIME CONSTANTS FROM WES DATA

Station	Time Constant (msec)	Number of data
М	0.487	2
N	0.386	2
C	4.73	2
מ	6,13	2

Table 4 ANALYSIS OF WES DATA

Height H (ft)	Radius _* R = H+R _o (ft)	Pressure ΔP (psi)	Pressure times Radius RAP (bsi ft)	Same, corrected for duration RAP f(0) (psi ft)
0.5	81.6	2.05	167	168.5
4	85.1	1.88	160	170
10	91.1	1.25	111,	131
16.2	97.3	0.98	95	115

 $R_0 = 4.97 \times 16.22 = 81.1 \text{ ft}$

Table 5 RESULTANT DATA, PROJECT 4.5

	Surface Zero Station						
Gage	OTD	OHD	OMN	Olin	Average		
P _l Initial Rise (psi)	0.799	0.861	0.793	0.727	0.795 0.055		
P ₂ Max Fressure (psi)	1.370	1.390	1.302	1.368	1.357 0.038		
P ₃ Final Pressure (psi)	1.23	1.33	1.12	1.18	1.214 0.09		
	403.5	404.6	403.9	404.6	403.9		
Trise Time to Max (msec)					29.8		
T Duration of Record (msec)					75•3		
O Inferred Time Constant (msec)					431		

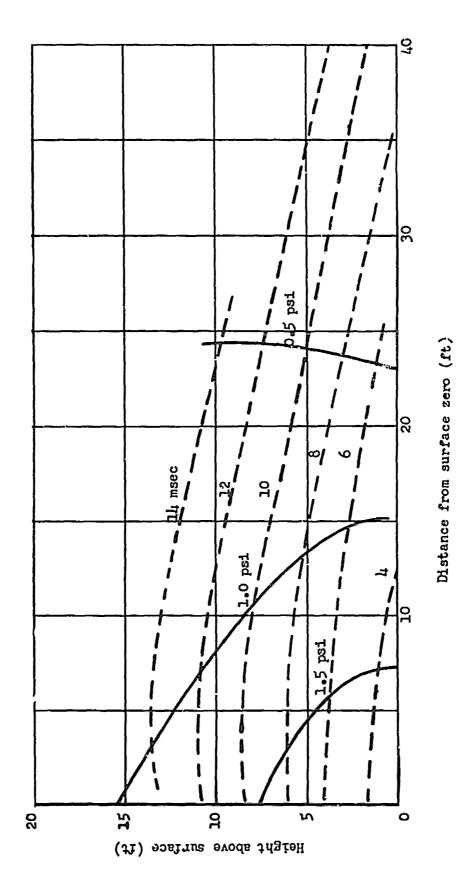
		6100-f Itation					
Gage	ln	2W	3 N	Γſ₩	5N	6W	Average
P _l First Max(psi)*		0.110		0. 143		0,115	0.123 ± 0.018
P ₂ Second Max(psi)*	0.172	0.138		0.165		0.156	0.158 ± 0.015
T _a Arrival Time (msec)	1182 ± 5	1182	1182	1182	1182	1182	1182 ± 5
T, Positive Duration (msec)	207.0	256.0		195.3		160.0	20կ.6±70

^{*} Secondary signals observed at 4.0, 5.9, and 11.8 sec.

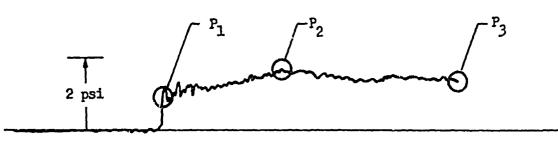
Table 6 COMPARISON OF MEASURED AND THEORETICAL COUPLING FACTOR

Station	Underwater pressure (psi)		pressure		Air pressure (psi)	Coupling (experimental)	Coupling (theoretical) Ratio		
0	NRL ARF	3000 _* 3609*	1.36 1.36	4.55 x 10 ⁻⁴ 3.78 x 10 ⁻⁴	5.35 x 10 ⁻¹⁴ 5.35 x 10 ⁻¹⁴	1.18			
6100	NOL	## 800	0.16 0.16	2.0 × 10 ^{-l} 1	1.71 x 10 ⁻¹⁴ 1.71 x 10 ⁻¹⁴	0.86			

^{*} Indirect measurement
** Not yet available

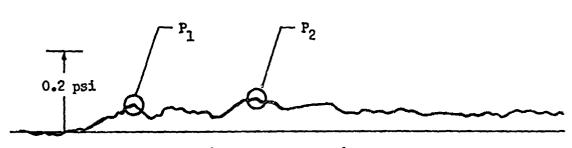


Mg. 1 WES data, pressures and arrival times



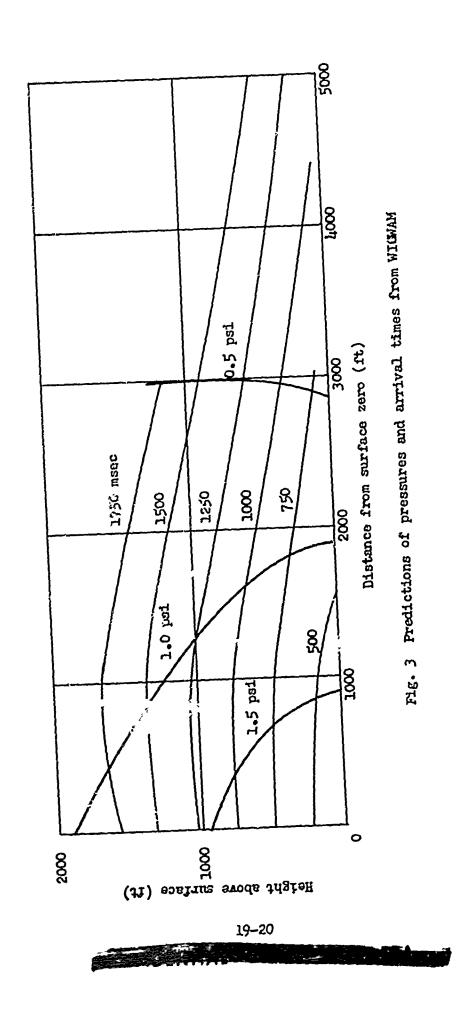
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Gage OMN, surface range 0 ft



Channel 4, surface range 6100 ft

Rig. 2 Sample wave forms



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 - Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington 25, D.C. 56 Director, Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, 7100 Comecticut Ave., Chevy Chase, Ma., Weshington 15, D.C. ATM: Library
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HAVY ACTIVITIES

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 - 25, D.C. ATM: Special Wespors Defense Div.

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- 117 Director of Research and Development, Resignanters, USAF, Washington 25, D.C. ATTS: Combet Components Dir.
- Div.

 118-119 Director of Intelligence, Heedquarters, USAF, Weshington 25, D.C. ATTH: AFOHM-IB2

 120 The Surgeon General, Headquarters, USAF, Washington 25, D.C. ATTH: Bio. Def. Br., Pre. Med. Div.

 121 Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Headquarters, U.S. Air Forces Europe, AFO 633, c/o FM, Hew York, M.T. ATTH: Directorate of Air Targets

 122 Commander, 497th Recommander Technical Squadron (Augmented), AFO 633, c/o FM, New York, M.T.

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 - commander, Air Training Command, Scott AFB, Belleville, Ill. ATTH: DCS/O GTP occander, Air Research and Development Command, PO Box 1395, Beltimore, Md. ATTH: RESE commander, Air Proving Ground Command, Eglin AFB, Fla. ATTH: AG/NB 129 Coe
- 132-133 Director, Air University Library, Maxwell are, name 134-141 Commander, Flying Training Air Force, Vaco, Tex.

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- 143 Commander, Headquarters, Technical Training Air Force, Gulfport, Miss. ATTS: TABD 144-145 Commandant, Air Force School of Aviation Medicins, Randolph AFB, Tex.

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- 165-171 Technical Information Service, Oak Ridge, Tenn. (Surplus)

OTHER DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ACTIVITIES

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- 173 U.S. Documents Officer, Office of the U.S. Bational Military Representative - SEAFE, APO 55, New York, Zev York
- 174 Director, Wespons Systems Evaluation Group, OSD, Fn 221006, Pentagon, Washington 25, D.C.
- 175 Armed Services Explosives Safety Board, D/D, Building T-7, Gravelly Point, Washington 25, D.U.
- 176 Commandant, Armed Forces Staff College, Forfolk 11, Va. ATM: Secretary
- 177-182 Commanding General, Field Command, Armed Forces Special Vespons Project, PO Box 5100, Albuquerque, N.
- Nex. 183-184 Commanding General, Field Command, Armed Forces, Special Wespors Project, PO Box 5100, Albuquerque, N. Mex. ATTN: Technical Training Group 185-193 Chief, Armed Forces Special Vespons Project, Vashington
- 25, D.C. ATTS: Document Library Branch
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 203-206 Los Alamos Scientific Leboratory, Report Library FO
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- 212-213 University of California Radiation Laboratory, PO Fox 808, Livermore, Calif. ATTM: Margaret Zólusd
 215 Wespon Data Section, Technical Information Dervice, Oak Ridge, Tenn.
 216-260 Technical Information Service, Oak Ridge, Tenn.

